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EDITORIALS

Downtown fixture

Farmers Market deserves permanent home

The Farmers Market in Lexington has come of age and deserves a place of its own.

The market, pushing 20, has been a magnet for activity downtown for years at its temporary lodgings on Vine Street on Saturdays and a dusty edge of the Lexington Center parking lot at South Broadway and West Maxwell Street on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

A likely development project on Vine means the market will have to move. Farmers and market director Jeff Dabbelt would like to make Broadway and Maxwell a permanent home, under a roof with running water, electricity and other comforts.

A structure would protect the farmers and their customers from the elements and allow the market to be open more of the year.

Bill Owen, executive director of the Lexington Center Corp., seemed open to the idea but said any agreement about the 1-acre site must be approved by the center's board.

One piece of advice for the board: Make it happen.

Downtown Lexington is coming back to life now, a welcome revival. But long before the condominium developments, Starbucks and even Alfalfa's restaurant, were downtown, Farmers Market was consistently drawing an enthusiastic, diverse crowd to Lexington's center city.

With little more than some hot pavement and portable awnings for a home, the market has expanded its season and its offerings while doubling in size. It has connected local and regional farmers with the customers they need and given Lexingtonians access to high-quality, locally produced goods.

The Lexington Center's mission is to draw people to the city and entertain them while they are here. Farmers Market has been doing that for years.

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